

*Bulletin of The
Heather Society*



NB
Advertisement pages at end
of this part have not been scanned

Vol. 7 No. 15

Spring 2012

DIARY OF EVENTS

2012

- | | | |
|-----------|---|---|
| 10 March | Yorkshire | 2.30 - 4.30 pm Photographs of heathers.
Wolfson Room, Bramhall Learning Centre,
Harlow Carr |
| 17 March | Home Counties | 10.30 am outside the entrance to Wisley
Gardens, for a walk up to view the winter
heathers in the National Heather Collection |
| 15 May | CLOSING DATE FOR SUMMER BULLETIN | |
| 26 May | Yorkshire | 2.30 - 4.30 pm Wolfson Room, Bramhall
Learning Centre, Harlow Carr |
| 7-10 Sept | ANNUAL GATHERING, FALMOUTH, CORNWALL | |
| 6 October | Yorkshire | 2.30 - 4.30 pm The Old Bath House, Harlow
Carr |

A Gift of Membership for 2012

The Society is keen to encourage new members to join. Every existing member could assist by giving a year's membership as a gift. Remember, it is a gift that will last until the close of 2012! Fill out an application form (we enclosed one with the Autumn 2010 *Bulletin*) for a family member or a friend, someone keen on gardening and the outdoors, and leave the rest to us.

For each gift membership we will send *you* a beautiful bell-heather card with a printed message inside — *A full year's membership of The Heather Society for 2012 is sent with very best wishes by ...* — for you to personalize and give to, or send on to, the intended recipient. Soon afterwards, or at any time you specify, we will send the recipient a letter of welcome, a complimentary colour chart and badge with *Heathers 8*, the *Spring Bulletin ...* and so on.

For only £15 (for UK addresses, or £18 for Europe or £21 anywhere else, you can solve your gift "problem" and give a whole year's pleasure.



Charity Registered in England and Wales No. 261407

Editor: Daphne Everett, The Bannut, Bringsty, Herefordshire, WR6 5TA.
Telephone: 01885 482206 e-mail: everett@bannut.co.uk

Cover illustration *Erica Carnea* by Brita Johansson

Cuttings swap - what a wonderful idea! For many years it has worried me that many of the cultivars that were popular when I first grew heathers fifty years ago, might be being lost to cultivation (as with the true Erica tetralix 'Ken Underwood' which no-one seems to have any more). Nurseries and Garden Centres naturally concentrate on a limited range of the newer varieties, so this is a wonderful opportunity for Heather Society members to help to conserve some of our heather history.

Chairman's Piece

David Edge

The second warmest Autumn on record they tell me. It has certainly made life easier down south with the reduced heating bills and the heathers and even the weeds looking very happy in this milder climate.

We spent ten days in France during mid-November, south of Paris, near Blois and included a most interesting visit to the Arboretum des Grandes Bruyères (see *Heathers* 8: 2011 16-19 for an account). Bernard and Bridgitte de la Rochefoucauld made us very welcome and despite our visit being in the closed period we were able to tour the garden. We viewed its extensive display of heathers and collection of magnolias and Japanese maples, in warm sunshine and wonderful solitude. If you are in the area you will be made most welcome.

Back to the UK: the New Year winds which were 'stronger than expected' have wreaked havoc in gardens and nurseries, now good gardening time must be spent clearing up the mess and repairing the damage. Some heathers in the garden, especially the *Erica x darleyensis* and *Erica erigena* varieties have decided to brighten up the Autumn and commence their flowering early rather than waiting for Spring to occur.

The joint BHGA/THS display of heathers at Hampton Court appears to have raised their profile and popularity. Enquiries regarding the show stand have come in from as far as Eastern Europe and Australia. Discussions are in hand regarding their inclusion in a show garden at Chelsea this year.

The list of cuttings for the cuttings swap scheme is included in this mailing. Thanks are due to the co-ordinator of the project, Brian Burling, for his hard work in compiling the list and, of course, to all the members who have taken part so far.

Annual Gathering

7th - 10th September 2012

Have a look in your diary and see if you are free for this weekend in September this year, because it would be an ericaceous crime to miss this gathering based in Falmouth.

We have three eclectic speakers lined up, two outstanding gardens and nurseries, plus the opportunity to meet with old friends and make new ones. At the plant sale you might be lucky enough to find that rare cultivar that has been difficult to source, but above all the weekend will give you the chance to meet with like minded people.

Our speakers are Keith Spurgin, Steve Yandall and Dr. E. G. H. Oliver.

The Gardens are Trewidden, near Penzance and Pinetum Park & Pine Lodge Gardens, near St Austell.

And as a final high point, we are hoping to test your knowledge of heathers in an informal manner.

The Date - 7th - 10th September 2012

The Venue - Richardson's Falmouth Hotel, Falmouth, Cornwall

The Cost - £310 - The cost indicated includes all entrance fees, speakers, lunches and tips, and of course dinner, bed & breakfast. The full amount must be paid to The Administrator by Saturday, 30th June.

Our Speakers

Keith Spurgin is a botanist and film maker and will talk about "Aspects of Heathers in Cornwall"

Steve Yandall is a plant breeder and nurseryman with a special interest in heathers growing in Cornwall.

Keith and Steve will guide us on a short walk on the Lizard Peninsula to see some of the wild plants that grow in Cornwall.

Dr. E. G. H. Oliver, better known as Ted, is the world expert on Cape Heaths. He will be sharing with us some of the work that is being conducted on DNA sequences of all ericaceous plants.

The A.G.M. will be held on Sunday morning as usual.

If you have found the space in your diary, then fill it in with these dates and complete the enclosed flyer as soon as possible as spaces are limited and we already have great interest in attending this year's gathering.

We also welcome day visitors if you should choose to stay in other accommodation. Prices for this can be obtained by either phoning me (00353 95 43575) or emailing susiek@gofree.indigo.ie. Or you can contact The Administrator, address on the back cover of the Bulletin.

Council are really keen to meet all of the members of The Heather Society, so please fill in the form as quickly as you can and send it to the Administrator.

Susie Kay

Tippitiwitchet Corner: Administrator's log no. 14

Email: theheathersociety@phonecoop.coop

2012 subscriptions

Thank you to all those who have renewed their subscriptions. If yours is still due (on the date of posting) there will be a reminder in this package and we look forward to receiving your cheque, or payment by other means. If there is no reminder you can be certain your subscription is up-to-date. Please remember that from 1 January 2011 the additional fee for paying by credit/debit card is £5 per transactions due to the amount that the Society is charged by the bank to maintain the facility for using credit and debit cards.

E-mail addresses

It is a few years since we asked members who have email to provide their current email address. In this package there is a form indicating how you can most easily do this. In fact, it is via The Heather Society's website <http://www.heathersociety.org/>, so if you have not yet visited it and have internet access and an email address, please go to the home page. In the top right corner there is a "Contact" link, which you can click. This will bring you to an automatic message page. Complete the fields, putting into the SUBJECT box "update details" and your correct postal address in the MESSAGE box. Then complete the 4 character request and click send. Nothing could be simpler!

We do not provide email addresses to third parties, and we do not send out a large volume of emails to members. Indeed, the only email you might receive from The Heather Society is a reminder about an event in your region.

2012 yearbook, Heathers 9

The 2012 yearbook is enclosed with this issue of the *Bulletin*. As honorary editor I am most grateful to everyone who assisted, especially the authors and the assistant editors who have been exceptionally thorough proof-readers.

I would like to encourage members to contribute to the 2013 issue. Given that The Heather Society was founded in 1963, this will be the Society's Golden Jubilee year so it would be good to have a bumper issue with plenty of current interest and reminiscences.

RHS Perfect for Pollinators

The Royal Horticultural Society has released a special logo for use on bee-friendly plants, including heathers. You can look for bee-friendly plants in UK garden centres and nurseries by seeking this logo. (Members living outside the UK can adapt these points for local conditions.)



The advice given by the RHS includes the following:

- Avoid plants with double or multi-petalled flowers. Such flowers may lack nectar and pollen, or insects may have difficulty in gaining access. To this we could add the advice to avoid *Calluna* cultivars that are "bud-bloomers" as they do not usually have nectaries and almost never have stamens, so they provide neither nectar nor pollen.

- Never use pesticides on plants when they are in flower.

- Where appropriate, native wild flowers can be an attractive addition to planting schemes and may help support a wider range of pollinating insects. But, do make sure they are truly indigenous and that they have been raised from local seeds, otherwise you are introducing non-native "lineages".

For more information those with internet access can visit the RHS website and download the list of "Plants for bees" -

<http://www.rhs.org.uk/Media/PDFs/Advice/Plants-for-bees>. I will be happy to print a copy of this on request for anyone who does not have internet access (please send a self-addressed envelope for this list).

... and finally, The Heather Society in print

I have been reading *The paper garden* by Molly Peacock (Bloomsbury, £20 ISBN-UK 9781408821015). It has the odd subtitle *An artist [begins her life's work] at 72*, and is about Mrs Mary Delany (1700–1788) whose collages of plants are one of the treasures of the British Museum. Indeed, Ruth Hayden wrote an article about the dozen collages which depict various Cape heaths many years ago (*Yearbook of The Heather Society* 1976, pp 11-14.). Mrs Hayden was a member of the Society in those early days and contributed items to the *Bulletin* about, for example, heathers in the armed forces, her garden in Bath, and also variously about Mrs Delany who was her great-great-great-great-great-aunt. I was, however, quite surprised, reading Molly Peacock's book, which mingles Mrs Delany's biography with Mrs Hayden's, as well as Peacock's autobiography, to find brief but very prominent mention of this Society (p. 277).

Throughout the 1970s, [writes Peacock], in her fifties, Ruth [Hayden] made repeated return trips to the Study Room [in the British Museum]. First, she looked for heathers, just to satisfy her membership of the Heather Society. Then it became a routine, almost like going to church.

Earlier (p. 275) we read that when her husband Freddie retired from the Royal Navy, he became a management consultant, and the family moved to "a rambling house in Bath". Ruth "joined the Heather Society and started a garden."

Alas, there is nothing else about heathers nor are any of the Cape heath "paper mosaicks" illustrated.

Charles Nelson

Philomath Frolickings

Ella May T. Wulff - Philomath, Oregon

When the Oregon Heather Society (OHS) planned a small heather garden for the Philomath Community Library, we knew that the underlying clay soil in the garden's location would add considerable challenge to the undertaking. We therefore both amended the clay and raised the level of the garden considerably above its flat base [THS Bulletin 7(9): 6-10, Spring 2010]. The situation is still far from ideal for growing heathers, but we thought that it would work. Certainly the tops and slopes of the artificial hills in the garden provide easily penetrated soil to a good depth. The provision of sufficient, but not too much, water during western Oregon's hot, dry summers remains crucial to the success of the garden.

Despite the horrendous cold spell of early December 2009, most of the newly planted heathers survived and were growing well, some even flowering, by midsummer 2010. Early summer watering was done awkwardly but adequately with an oscillating sprinkler attached to a long hose, but this was only a stopgap measure that resulted in a fair amount of concrete being watered as well as the plants because of the irregular shape of the garden.

Later that summer, we were able to install soaker hoses around the heather plants to direct irrigation water only to where it is needed. Four hoses provide water to plants on each side of the gravel path that irregularly bisects the garden. Each side of the garden has four hose bibs¹ on a water pipe connected to the automatic irrigation system that waters the rest of the library grounds during western Oregon's dry summers. The main irrigation control panel inside the library can be programmed so that different watering zones will receive water for different lengths of time. We could set the irrigation controls so that the two pipes to the heather garden would deliver the amount of water we wanted the heathers to receive.

We programmed the controls, tested to see that water was actually seeping out through the tiny holes in the soaker hoses when the system was set to "on", set the control back to "automatic", covered the soaker hoses with bark mulch, and figured that we were good to go. Although four OHS members live within three miles of the library, we all are so busy that we didn't actually check up on the garden very often once we had ascertained that the heathers were receiving water regularly. However, when we pruned the callunas that fall, it was obvious that several plants of *Erica cinerea* 'Purple Beauty', all of which had been gorgeous and healthy looking in early summer, were struggling, and one of the four large plants of *E. carnea* 'Golden Starlet' had died. Loss of the latter was not particularly worrisome, because the remaining plants had the potential to eventually fill its allotted space. The cinereas were another matter.

Erica cinerea is notoriously fussy about soil moisture, especially when not fully established. Give it too much or too little water, and it will decline or

¹ If there are any readers who don't know what a bib is (as I didn't) - it is a tap with a screw connection to a hose pipe. Ed.

outright die. The dead 'Golden Starlet' was next to the unhappy 'Purple Beauty' plants, so our guess was that there was too little water coming from the soaker hose that watered this area. (Soaker hoses can sometimes water unevenly if some of their holes become clogged. They can also deliver less water at the ends than in the middle.) To be on the safe side, in case the problem was actually too much water, we pulled the existing bark mulch away from all of the *E. cinerea* plants in the garden and replaced it with a five-centimetre mulch of quarter-ten sharp gravel. In my home garden, I'd started to experiment with using gravel mulch around struggling *cinereas*. I'd had one particularly favourable response from a plant of 'Golden Drop' that had languished for years, neither dying (as had its nearby comrades) nor increasing in size. Within a few months of being mulched with gravel, this plant had doubled in size. It certainly wouldn't hurt to try a gravel cure for the library *cinereas*.

Once the rainy season begins, usually sometime in October, the library's irrigation system is turned off and watering is left to Mother Nature. Just to be on the safe side, we also close the valves to the hose bibs in the heather garden. Last winter's precipitation was much higher than average. In late winter, when we pruned all the heathers that couldn't safely have been pruned in the fall, the plants appeared to be in the same condition as they had been during the fall pruning session. They had survived the winter and shouldn't need further attention until the dry season arrived.

The rains lasted well into spring. We'd had several warm weeks without rain before I thought to ask Paul Dickey, whose idea this garden was (Paul is also quite active with Friends of the Library), to turn the irrigation back on for the summer. He assured me that he'd already done this. Thus I was shocked by what greeted me a few weeks later when next I visited the garden.

The plants on one side of the path appeared to be doing well. Those on the other side looked awful, with a few notable exceptions such as *E. erigena* 'Maxima'. Not only had the ailing plants of 'Purple Beauty' not recovered. Those that had looked the healthiest in the fall were now struggling. Some of the weaker ones had died. But it was the condition of the *callunas* that really indicated something very bad going on. Several had died, and none of them looked very good, with many dead branches, unlike the same cultivars in my garden, which were thriving. Only 'Sun Sprinkles', planted on a steeper slope than the other *callunas* on this side of the path, looked half decent. What was going on here?

The obvious first thing to check was to be sure that the water to the heather garden actually had been turned on as Paul had indicated. According to his recheck of the control panel inside the library, it had been. Next step was to be sure that the valves in the pipes serving the soaker hoses were open. Ah-hah! The valve to one pipe was open, but the other was closed. Here was the source of the problem. This was an open and shut case. One side of the garden was being irrigated. The other was not. Except – the side not being watered was the side where the plants were healthy. What was going on?

Back to the control panel inside the library. This is not the most sophisticated automatic irrigation system available. It can control a very limited number of

watering zones. When the heather garden pipes were added to the system, we thought that we could control for both duration and frequency of watering and had set (we thought) the system to water for 45 minutes twice a week. Now we realized that the heather garden was, indeed, receiving water for 45 minutes each time the water went on, but we had erred in assuming that this would be on the two days we had designated. Any time the water in any part of the system was on, water was flowing into the heather garden pipes. Only the closed valve on one pipe had saved the entire garden from drowning, because the library lawn was watered every weekday morning. We couldn't prevent the heathers from being watered every day. All we could do was to reduce that watering to a few minutes duration instead of nearly an hour. And it was imperative that both valves be open. The un-watered side was living on water stored in the soil. As week followed week without measurable precipitation, it would not be long before that side was bone dry.

We opened the second valve and set the timer to only 10 minutes duration in the hope that this would be enough but not too much water for the heathers. This strategy seems to have worked, because now (early January 2012) the heathers on the healthy side of the garden are all still healthy. In fact, that side is beginning to look quite good.

Damage to the other side caused by the excessive water supplied in early summer was not so easily undone. Several of the suffering, undoubtedly diseased, *callunas* died, but they left behind some interesting seedlings. I figured that because these little guys had planted themselves and seemed healthy, I'd just leave them for awhile. Two are in bright red winter foliage, one is grey, the last green. I suppose that I should separate them a bit while it is still raining, so that those moved can have a chance to become well established before summer, but they may spoil the planting design with those striking colours. (The dead *callunas* were grey.) On the other hand, something very good may result. We can always take cuttings and rearrange them later, if necessary.

When planting a garden, it is necessary to plan for every contingency – and then expect the unexpected to happen. The creators of public gardens face not only the challenges, expected or unexpected, posed by their attempts to modify a small part of the natural world to unnatural purposes. They also face entirely unpredictable challenges arising from the public aspect of these gardens. The heather garden at the Philomath Community Library does not belong to the Oregon Heather Society. It belongs to the City of Philomath and sits on land dedicated to the city library. It is thus open to assault by the public at large and from city employees, whose job descriptions undoubtedly do not include the maintenance, protection, and well-being of the library heather garden as their primary – or any – responsibility.

The metal boxes containing the garden hose bibs and their control valves are accessible to everyone. Who shut the control valve for one side of the garden? It was probably a city employee doing maintenance work on the water system and forgetting to open the valve when the work was finished. It just as easily, though not as likely, could have been a bored teenager fooling around in the garden when the library was closed. Whoever shut the valve did

us a huge favour by inadvertently alerting us to a problem we had not anticipated when we planned the garden's irrigation system. Had both valves been left open as we intended, the entire garden would have suffered from the over-watering, and we might still be scratching our collective head over the plants' demise. Instead, this unplanned experiment has added weight to the already strong body of evidence supporting the necessity for excellent drainage in a heather garden.

Putting the Face to the Name Dr Colin Rogers

To my mind, the most beautiful of the heathers native to the UK is *Erica cinerea* 'Eden Valley', especially when used as a single specimen rather than en masse. Look at Plate 57 in Proudley, B & V, *Heathers in colour* (1974) if you don't know the plant. Some years after falling in love with it, I was delighted to read an article in the Society's 1985 Yearbook about the rather eccentric life of its discoverer, and even more fascinated to see photographs of the house after which the plant was named, and of Miss Gertrude Waterer herself.

Photographic enhancement of the enjoyment of any particular cultivar is fairly easily gained though locating pictures of the plant itself, especially on the Society's website or one of the professional nursery websites; but finding pictures of the discoverers, of those after whom a plant is named, or of those who have played a part in the life of the Society over the years, is not so easy. Accordingly I set about compiling such a list.

The list which follows shows how much we owe to the Society's Yearbooks rather than to published books about heathers.

+ = obituary:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| a | Adrian Bloom's guide to garden plants 1 - <i>Heathers</i> (Jarrold, 1975) |
| b | Lambie, D. & B., <i>Heathers: a guide to designing</i> (n.d.) |
| c. | Bloom, A., <i>Making the most of conifers and heathers</i> (1989) |
| d. | Small, D., and Wulff, E. M., <i>Gardening with hardy heathers</i> (2008) |
| e. | McClintock, D., <i>Heathers of the Lizard</i> (1998) |
| H | <i>Heathers</i> (Yearbook of The Heather Society) vols 1-8 |
| HSB | The Heather Society <i>Bulletin</i> (6.6 to pd only) |
| YB | The Heather Society <i>Yearbook</i> (1965 to pd only) |
| Ardron, John P., | YB 1972, 1979+ |
| Beale, Cecilia M., | YB 1980 |
| Beale, H. E., | YB 1980 |
| Bingham, Peter, | H8, HSB 5.19 |
| Bloom, A., | YB 1978, H8, a, c, |
| Bowerman, Alfred H., | H7 |
| Bowerman, David, | H7 |
| Bowerman, Margaret, | H7 |
| Boxall, M., | YB 1978 |
| Brickell, C. D., | YB 1979 |
| Bridgland, John G., | YB 1985, HSB 7.2+ |
| Briggs, Mrs Mary | YB 1973 |
| Canovan, Richard, | H5, H6, HSB 7.5 |
| Chapple, Fred J., | YB 1963, YB 1972, 1973+, HSB 7.2 |
| Charrington, Sir John, | YB 1963, YB 1966, 1972, 1978+, 1988, YB 2003 |
| Cleevely, Ron J., | YB 2001, H2 |
| Cleevely, Ros., | H2, H8 |
| Cording, Miss, | YB 2003 |
| David, Edith, | d. |
| Davidson, Jean, | HSB 7.2 |
| Dome, Art, | 6.1 |
| Dyson, Kathleen, | HSB 6.17 |
| Edge, David, | HSB 5.19, 7.5 |
| Ellis, Mrs., | YB 1978 |

- Esgate, Fred, H2, HSB 6.16
 Everett, Daphne, HSB 6.3, 6.4
 Farrah, Beryl, HSB 617+
 Farrah, Kenneth H., YB 1984
 Fox, Martin, H4
 Grattan, Patrick, H6
 Gray, Violet (Mrs Ronald) YB 1972, H2
 Griffiths, John H3, H8, d, HSB 7.11
 Griffiths, Valerie, H3, d., HSB 7.11
 Hall, Allen, HSB 5.7
 Hanekom, Willem, YB 1999
 Hulme, Ken, HSB 6.10
 Jackson, Lesley (nee Sparkes), H6
 Jeskins, Dennis, HSB 7.11
 Jones, Albert W., YB 1992, 1999+
 Jones, Diane, YB 1992, HSB 5.8, 5.19
 Joyner, Philip, H2, HSB 6.13, HSB 6.1, 6.16
 Julian, Jean, H4, H6, HSB 6.2, 7.5
 Julian, Thomas Albert, YB 2002+
 Kay, Susie, H5, H6, H7, HSB 5.19, 6.11, 7.5, 7.8, 7.13
 Kay, Alan, H5, H7, HSB 5.19, 7.2
 Keyseres, Lena, H7
 Kirsten, Gerhard, YB 2000
 Knight, Alice, d.
 Kramer, Kurt, YB 1992, 2001
 Lambie, Betty, b
 Lambie, David, b, HSB 6.13,
 Lancaster, Roy, YB 2000
 Larkin, John, YB 1998
 Lautenschlager, Berndt, d.
 Lee, Pamela, YB 1993, HSB 5.8
 Letts, John, YB 1963
 Litterik, Audrey, YB 1998
 London, B. G., YB 1973
 MacKay, Fiona, H6
 MacLeod, Donald, YB 1964, YB 2003
 MacLeod, Mrs Constance I., YB 1972, 1978, 1988, 1996+, YB 2003, H2
 Maginess, Daphne, H1
 Maginess, Bill, H1
 Maginess, Patricia, H1, HSB 7.7+
 Maxwell, D. Fyfe YB 1966, YB 2003
 Mayne, Beryl HSB 6.15, HSB 7.12+
 Mayne, David, HSB 6.15, HSB 7.12
 McClintock, David, YB 1973, 1978, 1992, 1993, 2000, 2002+, H6, HSB 5.8, 6.3
 Merrin, Roy, HSB 6.4
 Millis, Derek, HSB 5.17, 6.7, 6.13, 6.16
 Millis, Pam, HSB 6.16
 Murphy, Joseph YB 1996
 Nelson, Charles, HSB 6.1, 6.16
 Nicholson, Hugh L., YB 1966, 1988, HSB 6.14+
 Oliver, Des. B., YB 1986, H 1+
 Oliver Edward G. H., YB 2000, H8, HSB 5.19, 7.9
 Oliver Inge, YB 2000, H 1+,
 Oliver, Thomas, YB 2001
 Osmond, Mary, H6
 Osti, Gianlupo, H5
 Pacilly, Paul HSB 5.8
 Parris, Mrs Anne, YB 1977
 Patrick, P.S. YB 1966, 1975+, YB 2003
 Pattenden, Mr & Mrs H., YB 1978
 Perry, Des., HSB 7.13
 Perry, Sybil, HSB 7.13+
 Petterssen, Eileen, H5, HSB 7.6
 Pirie, Mike, H8
 Platt, Jack, H7+, HSB 7.6+
 Plumridge, David, H6, HSB 6.16, HSB 7.5
 Plumridge, Rita, H6, HSB 6.16, HSB 7.5
 Porter, Eileen (Mrs J.W.), YB 1984, H7
 Porter, Heather, YB 1984
 Porter, James Walker YB 1984, H7
 Pratt, Bill, YB 1998
 Pringle, Anne HSB 6.3, 6.16
 Prothero, Joyce, YB 2002
 Proudley, Brian, HSB 7.1+
 Richards, Donald Arthur, H7+
 Richards, John, YB 2002
 Rogers, Colin, H4
 Schroeder, Jurgen, H8+
 Schumann, Dolf., YB 1998, 2002+
 Seabrook, Peter, c.
 Sellers, Barry, YB 1998, H6, HSB 5.19, 7.5
 Shaw, Josie, HSB 6.4
 Siph, Aaron, H8
 Slinger, Leslie, HSB 7.2
 Slinger, Ruby, HSB 7.2
 Small, Anne, YB 1992, H1, H2, H8, HSB 5.9, 6.20
 Small, David, YB 1978, 1992, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2001, H2, H8+, d (cover only), HSB 5.4, 5.8, 5.19
 Small, Ian, YB 1978, HSB 5.19
 Smith, Geoffrey, YB 2000, H7+, HSB 7.7+
 Smith, Miss Kellam, YB 2003
 Smith, L. W., YB 2003
 Smith, Marjorie, H7

continued on page 12

Heather Plantings at Philomath Community Library, Oregon



View from the northwest, with 3 *Carex* plants. *Erica Carnea* 'Wintersonne' on right along driveway, *Calluna* 'Annamarie' on left between sedges. *Calluna* 'Dunnet Lime' to left of central *Carex*.



Shows much of the garden viewed from west northwest of "good side". 'Dunnet Lime' in foreground.



Hedges of *Erica x darleyensis* 'Arthur Johnson'
150 feet in length.



Erica Carnea 'Wintersonne'

Erica Carnea 'Pink Spangles'



from page 9

- Sparkes, Joe, H6
 Sparkes, J. W. YB 1966, 1988
 Sparkes, Joan H6
 Sparkes, Nellie, H6
 Sparkes, Peter, YB 1966, 1988, H6,
 HSB 7.9+
 Sparkes, Ruth, H6
 Sparkes, Samuel, H6
 Stevens, F. J., YB 2003
 Stow, Arnold J., YB 1977, 1992, H7+,
 HSB 6.13, HSB 7.9
 Street, Mr & Mrs H., YB 1977
 Taylor, Joan, d.
 Tucker, John HSB 6.7
 Turner, E. R., YB 1978, H2, H5
 Turner, Mabel, H2
 Turner, Ross, H7
 Turner, Roy, H2
 Turpin, P. G., YB 1981, 1988, 1992,
 1997+
 Underhill, Terry, YB 1974
 Vickers, Peter, YB 1998, HSB 6.14+
 Villiers, Thys de, YB 2000
 Warner, Dorothy, HSB 6.15
 Warner, Ray, HSB 617+
 Waterer, Miss M. B. G., YB 1985, e.,
 Waterer, Percy, YB 1985
 Williams, P. D., e.
 Wilson, Tracy, YB 2000
 Wulff, Barry, HSB 5.19
 Wulff, Ella May, H1, HSB 5.19
 Yates, Jennifer, H7

The Doncaster Erica carneas**Albert Julian**[First printed in the *Yearbook of The Heather Society* 3 (8): 44-45 (1990)]

Whilst attending a Quaker social gathering in the early spring of this year I met Mr. Stephen Doncaster, a keen gardener and heather enthusiast, who lives in Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire. In the course of conversation I mentioned that his somewhat unusual surname had been given to two *Erica carnea* cultivars, 'Mrs Sam Doncaster' and 'Amy Doncaster'. To my surprise he said that Mrs Sam was his grandmother, and that Amy is related to him by marriage. Stephen, who inherited the Doncaster family love of gardening, was able to give me some interesting information on his forebears.

Brothers Daniel (1834–1912) and Samuel (1853–1934) were sons of Sheffield steel-maker Daniel Doncaster (1807–1884). Samuel married Emma Gertrude Barber (1853–1937) in 1877, and the popular purple/pink *E. carnea* 'Mrs Sam Doncaster', introduced by the firm of James Backhouse of York in their Coronation catalogue of 1911, bears her name. Samuel, who like his father was a steelmaker, built his house "Whinfell" at Whirlow, Sheffield, using local sandstone quarried on his land. The resulting quarry eventually formed an important part of his impressive garden, and (the third*) James Backhouse carried out much of the shrub and extensive heather plantings in the quarry. It is thought that there was a strong friendly relationship between Sam and the Quaker Backhouse family, of which the naming of the *E. carnea* cultivar was an expression.

The quarry gardens still exist and are owned by the Sheffield Corporation. Alas it is a pale shadow of its former magnificence. In 1958 the Backhouse Nursery was bought by the York Corporation and absorbed into the West Bank public park in Acomb on the outskirts of York. The greenhouses are in use still for raising plants for the parks and flower beds of York.

Daniel's son Edwin (nephew of Sam), a member of the Alpine Garden

Society, settled in Burley, near Ringwood, Hampshire, and created an alpine garden there. His first wife died in 1935, and he married Amy Baring of Chandler's Ford in 1947. She is the Amy after whom the salmon pink *E. carnea* 'Amy Doncaster' is named. Edwin died in 1950, and Amy continued to live in her house at Chandler's Ford, where she extended and developed her one-acre woodland garden, growing many uncommon ornamental plants. Roy Lancaster, in his article "A Garden of Memories" which appeared in the January 1982 issue of *The Garden*, gives an account of his visit to this unusual and lovely garden. Amy, born in 1894 still lives there, tending the garden that she has created and developed for nearly 60 years. *E. carnea* 'Amy Doncaster' was raised there, and was introduced by MacPenny's Nursery of Bransgore, near Christchurch, Dorset. There are two other plants that bear her name — *Calluna vulgaris* 'Amy' and *Helianthemum nummularium* 'Amy Baring'.

Note: * I am indebted to David McClintock for the information that members of three generations of the Backhouse family were named James. Their dates were 1794–1865, 1825–1890, and 1861–1945.

Who's that heather named after? II.

James Backhouse's winter heaths

Charles Nelson

The 1911 collection of a dozen *Erica carnea* cultivars, derived from Potter's continental selections (see *Heathers* 9. 2012), were variously named after several of the members of the Backhouse family, the wife of an important customer, and several members of European royal families.

Four of the clones had descriptive names and need not detain us: 'Gracilis', 'Pink Pearl', 'Praecox Rubra' and 'Winter Beauty'.

The Backhouses commemorated were James Backhouse and C. J. Backhouse. Given the date, the James after whom one of the heathers was named has to have been James Backhouse III (1861-1945). He had formed a



JAMES BACKHOUSE,
Of York.



CHARLES J. BACKHOUSE.

new company, Backhouse Nurseries (York) Ltd, in 1891, but it eventually was sold to the Hamilton family, after the nursery lands had been sold in 1921. He is best known now as the author of *Handbook of European birds* (1890). C. J. Backhouse was a member of the Darlington branch of the family. Charles James Backhouse (1848-1915), inherited a passion for daffodils from his father and raised numerous cultivars, including 'Mrs C. J. Backhouse', at one time the "mainstay of gardeners". He lived in St John's Hall "which lies in a remote situation on the edge of Pikestone Fell, overlooking the town of Wolsingham. County Durham."

'Mrs Sam Doncaster', originally published using her husband's Christian name unabbreviated ('Mrs Samuel Doncaster'), was Emma Gertrude Doncaster (née Barber) (1853-1937). She married Samuel Doncaster in 1877, and was one of Backhouse Nurseries' major clients around this time the catalogue was issued.

It is easy to unravel the four regal names, King George V (1865-1936) and his consort, who took the title Queen Mary, had acceded to the throne of the United Kingdom on 6 May 1910, and their coronation took place in Westminster Abbey the following summer on 22 June 1911. Princess Victoria Mary Augusta Louise Olga Pauline Claudine Agnes (1867-1953) was daughter of the Duke of Teck and Princess Mary of Cambridge, and so was a cousin of Queen Victoria.



King George V



Queen Mary

Their eldest son, Prince Edward Albert Christian George Andrew Patrick David, was invested as Prince of Wales on 13 July 1911, a few weeks after his parents' coronation, so he is the prince commemorated in the name of one of the other heathers. He was to succeed his father in 1936 as King Edward VIII but, famously, abdicated and is best known to us as the Duke of Windsor.

The Queen of Spain in 1911 was the Scottish-born Princess Victoria Eugenie Julia Ena (1887-1969), who had married King Alfonso XIII of Spain

in 1906. She had been born in Balmoral, and was a cousin of King George V. Her grandson is the reigning King Juan Carlos I of Spain.



Prince of Wales



Queen of Spain

There remains an enigma in the list: 'Thomas Kingscote'. The most likely person, given there are only two men so named in the 1901 and 1911 censuses of England and Wales, is Thomas Arthur Fitzhardinge Kingscote, C.V.O. (1845-1935), who in 1911 was Gentleman of the Cellars and Gentleman Usher to King George V. The family seat was Kingscote in Gloucestershire. There does not seem to be anything particularly heathery in his background or family estate, so the reason why his name was given to a heather is unclear.

Questions & Answers through the Society's website

Q: I saw heathers displayed in a living wall at Hampton Court Flower Show this year and am thinking of trying to recreate the effect in my garden. My wall is south-facing and partly in the shade of a large beech tree. How well would heathers grow in such a situation - they looked fabulous at Hampton Court. Would they require much maintenance once established in the wall? Your advice would be much appreciated. (Thank you, Claire McKenzie)

A: You most certainly can recreate the heather wall in your garden. Your south-facing aspect, partly shaded by a tree, lends itself to winter-flowering heathers. I recommend using *Erica carnea* cultivars, which are low growing and hardy. These occur naturally in the alpine regions of Europe, tumbling over rock faces, so are perfect candidates for this style of gardening. These will flower from January until April, depending on the cultivars you select, as well as providing harmonious hues of green foliage throughout the summer - as seen at Hampton Court (for photographs of the Hampton Court garden see *Heathers* 9: 34-38. 2012; or the 2011 Society's year in pictures CD).

We used the Vertigarden system – see <http://www.vertigarden.co.uk> – for our heather wall, which proved ideal. Use ericaceous compost with a 12–14 month (or longer) slow-release fertilizer incorporated. The modules take 16 large heather plugs, which initially require growing in the horizontal position, until the root systems establish. Once stable, the modules can be fixed to the wall (screws and brackets supplied). Each module comes with its own irrigation pipe, which is fixed internally. These interconnect between modules (vertically). Water is applied from the top, by connecting low pressure mains, which can be operated manually, or on a timer. Alternatively you could install a header tank governed by a ball-cock.

The only maintenance required is trimming and feeding. The heathers should be trimmed hard back (like a hedge) immediately after flowering has finished, and possibly again in early June. Don't trim after this as they produce buds from July on. They will require feeding from the second year on. Heathers are not gross feeders, so a low dose of liquid feed introduced into the irrigation system during the growing season will suffice. Alternatively you can insert some long-term slow-release granules into the growing media.

I trust the above satisfactorily answers your questions and inspires you into action.

John Hall (Chairman, British Heather Growers Association).

David Mayne

David Mayne sadly passed away on 16 January at the nursing home in Norfolk he moved to just before Christmas. David and his wife Beryl (who died in November 2009), were long-time members, having joined the Society in 1975 and David was also a member of Council for many years. He and Beryl moved from London to Yorkshire some years ago, where they became active members of the Yorkshire Group. They were regular and very popular attenders at the annual Conferences and were much missed when ill health prevented them from travelling. The funeral is being held on 17th February at St Faith crematorium, 75 manor Road, Norwich.



Judy Wiksten

The day I discovered Judy had died was a very sad one. Judy had been my very first heather friend after meeting her at Connemara National Park in September 1995. We met again a few days later at the International Conference held in Dublin and we both enjoyed going on the various trips that Charles Nelson had organised. Judy had spent time in Dublin as a student before becoming a police officer, so she knew her way around much better than I did.

I was drawn to her dry wit and observation of a minute detail which would turn any situation into a hilarious moment.

In September 2001 I was to fly to America for a visit to her home and then to attend the Northeast Heather Society Conference, but of course, I never made it due to the attacks in New York. Judy had prepared a wonderful set of visits and meals, but all to naught as the opportunity never arose again. The world of heathers fascinated her and in later times she spent many hours creating a heather garden at her summer home in Sweden.

With wit and observation came wonderful prose. Judy wrote many pieces for the *Bulletin* and *Year Book* which were very accurate and detailed. I particularly remember the advice on making compost, which involved taking all the coffee grounds from Dunkin Donuts as the main ingredient. She was a wonderful attendee at Conferences, always taking time to talk to everybody and glean as much knowledge as possible.

After retirement from the police force in Middleboro, the home in Sweden became her priority. In order to do this she started to learn Swedish and became fluent allowing herself to enjoy her time every summer.

Judy loved her independent travelling and visited many places in America, Europe and Africa. In 2003 she joined the Heather Society on its second field trip to South Africa.

I am sure many people have their own memories of Judy and, like me, will treasure them. Perhaps we shall meet again in a heathery heaven.

Susie Kay

Group News

All Society events, including group meetings, are now listed on www.heathersociety.org

Yorkshire

The Yorkshire Heather Group plan to hold three, probably four meetings this year. Bookings have been made with RHS Harlow Carr for three Saturday afternoons so far.

2.30 - 4.30pm on Saturday, 10 March 2012 in the Wolfson Room of the Bramall Learning Centre - Photographs of heathers.

2.30 - 4.30pm on Saturday, 26 May 2012 in the Wolfson Room of the Bramall Learning Centre.

2.30 - 4.30pm on Saturday, 6 October 2012 in the Old Bath House

We expect to organise a visit to a garden in late spring or summer. This will be planned at the March meeting.

The garden supervisors have not been happy with the layout of the large heather bed at the entrance to Harlow Carr for some time but lack of finance has prevented any work taking place. In modern terms it is too rectangular in shape and has a 90 angle on to the path. The gardeners are now enlarging it to put in a curved layout, which the gravel path will follow. This extended area will be planted with heathers so this is really an expansion of winter heathers and very few will be lost.

The bed of *Erica manipuliflora*, *Erica x griffithsii* and *Erica vagans* below the bookshop windows has had to be cleared. The majority of these plants

succumbed to the cold in the winter of 2010/11 but as they were planted in 1992 they had done well. The *Erica manipuliflora* were planted as a trial originally to see if they could cope with northern winters as they are not truly hardy, so eighteen years is pretty good.

The winter heathers planted behind the new learning centre are doing well but the *Callunas*, which were planted when the area in front of the Bramall Learning Centre was landscaped have been superseded by other species. Unfortunately this part of the garden, whilst much improved due to the money spent on drainage, is just not acid enough for *Callunas* to thrive well. One day there may be more planted in the south field where they were happy.

Jean Preston

Home Counties

Nothing formally organised for March in terms of having a lecture. I suggest that, if Home Counties members wish to meet up, then 10.30am, on Saturday 17 March 2012, outside the entrance to Wisley Gardens, for a walk up to view the winter heathers in the National Heather Collection.

I am currently considering the September/October event but no dates or speakers arranged.

Barry Sellers

Compulsive Heather Disorder

Heather addicts and other gardeners often suffer from **Compulsive Heather Disorder (CHD)**. Symptoms are likely to present themselves in adulthood, but may be traceable back to childhood, especially if one or both parents are affected. There is often a family history of this condition.

CHD is an incurable disease of the brain, and sufferers and their families must learn to live with the symptoms. These include:

Erosion of willpower. Resolutions such as "I'm not buying any more heathers" can be discounted. Patients will often ask their friends to bring back plant purchases made on joint visits in order to hide their relapse from husband or wife. No one is fooled.

Dislike of large lawns. These cause a serious itch in the fingers which improves when the grass area has been reduced in favour of another heather bed. Indeed, with age, sufferers often find comfort can only be achieved by doing away with grass altogether.

Self-deception. Patients will deny their obsession, maintaining (and possibly believing) that they are merely indulging in a hobby.

Inability to pass a nursery with the word 'heathers' in its blandishments. Or, sometimes, any kind of plant sale.

Unwillingness to go away for any length of time. This can be particularly tiresome for partners to come to terms with.

An unattractive antipathy to wildlife such as moles, voles, rabbits and deer.

Loss of space-estimating skills, leading to repeated pacing of the garden, pot in hand, despairingly seeking a site for a new heather they've just grown eight of.

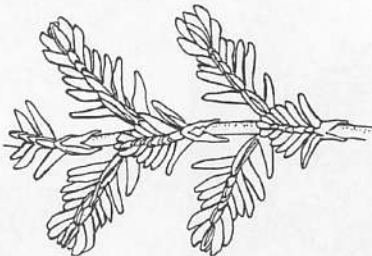
Anxiety attacks caused by prolonged periods of wet, drought and cold.

Selective memory loss. The ability to have Latin names such as *Erica mackayana forma multiplicata* tripping off the tongue, when they can't remember where they left the car keys.

Obstinate attachment to shabby and shapeless garments. Families learn that giving presents of smarter, more fashionable clothes to be worn while gardening is doomed to failure. Those afflicted by **CHD** seem not to care how they appear to others.

Pleasure in the company of fellow sufferers on the grounds that 'they understand'. Unlike alcoholics, who can turn their lives round once they admit they're in the grip of the condition, there seems no desire for a cure from **CHD**.

It's best to encourage sufferers to join The Heather Society where they will benefit from the company of those similarly afflicted.



USEFUL ADDRESSES

Society's Website: www.heathersociety.org.uk

- Chairman & Steering Committee** *Policy matters, major events etc.*
Mr. D. Edge, Forest Edge Nursery, Verwood Road, Woodlands, Wimborne, BH21 8LJ. *Fax:* (01202) 829564
- Treasurer** Mr. P.L. Joyner, 84 Kinross Road, Rushington, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 9BN. *e-mail:* philjoyner@btinternet.com *Tel:* (02380) 864336
- Secretary & Slide Librarian** *Council Matters*
Mr. R. Bowater, 16, Hamilton Drive, Ratcliffe on Trent, Nottingham NG12 1AG.
e-mail: richard.bowater1@btinternet.com
- Slide Librarian** *Photographic Archive & Hire of slides*
Mrs J. Preston, 21, Church Street, Dunnington, York YO19 5PP.
Tel: (01904) 489624
- Yearbook Editor & Registrar** *Articles for the Yearbook / Naming of Heathers*
Dr. E.C. Nelson
For details - see back cover
- Bulletin Editor** *Notes, articles for the Bulletin*
Mrs. D. Everett, The Bannut, Bringsty, Herefordshire, WR6 5TA.
e-mail: everett@bannut.co.uk *Tel:* (01885) 482206
- Administrator** *Subscriptions, Orders for publications etc.*
Dr. E.C. Nelson
For details - see back cover
- Conference Manager** Mrs. S. Kay, Lettergesh East, Renvyle, Co. Galway, Republic of Ireland
e-mail: susiek@gofree.indigo.ie *Tel:* (00353 95) 43575
- Group Organisers** *(Remember, you will be very welcome at any local meeting or visit!)*
- East Midlands** Mr. A. Hall, 10, Upper Green, Nanpantan, Loughborough, Leics. LE11 3SG.
e-mail: halla32@tiscali.co.uk *Tel:* (01509) 238923
- North East** Mrs. D. M. Warner, Littlecroft, Click-em-in, Ponteland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE20 9BQ.
Tel: (01661) 823299
- Home Counties** Mr. B. Sellers, 8 Croft Road, Norbury, London SW16 3NF.
e-mail: sellersbarry@aol.com
- South West** Mr. P.L. Joyner, 84 Kinross Road, Rushington, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire, SO40 9BN. *e-mail:* philjoyner@btinternet.com *Tel:* (02380) 864336
- Yorkshire** Dr. J. Griffiths, 9, Ashlea Close, Leeds, West Yorkshire. LS25 1JX.
Tel: (01132) 863349